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land to his individual advantage, and such phenomena as absentee landlordism, mortgaging, and excessive fractionation, that have been so pronounced among the Indian peasantry, may appear. At the present, rent-paying only exists in a few areas, particularly on the copper-belt, where the Government allocated a number of eight-acre plots to be let to natives living round Ndola, Luanshya, and Nkana at rentals of about £2. 10s. a year. This step, taken in order to give the urban native a feeling of security and individual possession, was eagerly welcomed by men of initiative as a means by which they could build their own houses and provide accommodation for their dependent relatives, whom it was then practically impossible to house in the Government locations or mine compounds. But, paradoxically enough, the introduction of rent seemed to me to have produced the feeling of uncertainty as to the use of land for the first time. This was partly because the rent was a new imposition in native eyes,[1] and partly because the dues of the chief were and are enacted in commodities the people possess —labour and food—instead of money, which they sometimes cannot obtain. Also the produce taken to a chief varies according to the state of the harvest, and only sufficient for the ruler's own needs is demanded when times are hard. But rent is a fixed sum whether the money is available or not. The only natives I ever met who were definitely anxious about their possession of land were those on the three-acre Government plots outside Luanshya, who were caught by the slump in 1933 and were threatened with eviction if they did not find rent. They seemed quite content that the Government, like the chief, should levy toll on their earnings when they had any, but thought it unjust that they should be asked to pay money if they had no means of getting any paid work. I heard for the first time the statement that it was no use developing the ground, since one might not have the money to pay the rent next year.

As a matter of fact, there does not seem any reason why the Bemba should not adopt a fixed method of cultivation in the rural districts and adapt their traditional form of occupier tenancy to

rights over land from governmental functions'. *An African People in the Twentieth Century*, 1934, p. 166.

[1] Near Kasama I was visited by four men returned from the mines who asked indignantly why the missionaries taught that the land belonged to the High God (*Lesa*) if the people had to pay rent to the Government for it?

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423 this end. It has been shown in many parts of Africa that the Bantu
427 system based on the practice of shifting cultivation is quite easily
177 adapted, without any need of Government interference, to situations in which bush land becomes limited or acquires additional value for any other reason. The Bemba rules of ownership of village gardens or deserted house sites, or the more complex regulations of land tenure found among the Bisa on the Bangweolu islands, show that even in this area individual rights over land can become very clearly defined when ground for cultivation is scarce, but that the introduction of a rent-paying system and the right to sell or lease land is quite unnecessary to secure this end.